

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

The amendments to claim 1 find support from former claims 3-6, 8 and 10. The amendments to claim 12 are supported by former claims 8 and 10.

Substance of the Interview

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the telephone interview of June 3, 2005. During this interview applicants discussed amending the independent claims to recite an assembly comprising a sheath and a work surface. The Examiner was of the opinion that this would not overcome the prior art and believes that the German patent discloses a work surface.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC 103

Claims 1 – 13 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over either US 5,123,595 (Doss) or DE 3323710 (Fischer) in view of US 5,346,426 (Kronfält). Applicants have amended claim 10 to include the recitations of previous claim 10, which was indicated as allowable in the first Office Action dated September 14, 2004.

Applicants urge that no combination of the cited references teach the invention of amended claims 1 and 12. Namely, neither Doss or Fischer, in light of Kronfält disclose a diffusion cone secured to the end of a sleeve positioned inside the sterile air feed duct on the longitudinal axis x of the sheath and presenting a section that is smaller than that of the sheath. There is also no suggestion that sleeve is made of a textile material such that under the action of the sterile air passing through it takes up an oval shape and comes into contact with the inside face of a wall of the sheath. Finally, there is no disclosure that such a diffusion cone is made of a perforated flexible material, a synthetic fabric or a perforated rigid material.

Conclusion

Applicants urge that the present application is in condition for allowance and solicit a notice to this effect. The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative with any questions.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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